DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 347 746 EC 301 362

TITLE	Introducing Students to Careers in Special Education and Related Services. Professional Action Series.
INSTITUTION	National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education, Reston, VA.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-86586-230-3
PUB DATE	92
CONTRACT	H030E00001-91A
NOTE	29p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091-1589 (stock no. R638: $14.30; $10 members).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Attitude Change; Career Awareness; *Career Exploration; Clubs; Consciousness Raising; *Disabilities; Elementary Secondary Education; *Group Activities; *Sensitivity Training; *Special Education; *Special Education Teachers; Volunteers

ABSTRACT

This guide presents a collection of ideas for activities to encourage students and other individuals to explore careers in special education and related services. After a brief introduction, activities to increase disability awareness are described. These include: a disability awareness day/week, a work day, a social event, child care, a buddy system, and volunteering. Next, activities to foster career awareness are suggested. These include: career awareness presentations, field trips, serving as a recreation program aide, serving as a student aide or peer tutor, and establishing a student club. Each major section also lists resources including organizations and print and non-print media. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED347746

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

Professional Action Series

Introducing Students to Careers in Special Education and Related Services

National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education

EC 301362

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Professional Action Series

Introducing Students to Careers in Special Education and Related Services

A Product of the
National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education
Published by The Council for Exceptional Children

Library of Congress Catalog Number 92-73058

ISBN 0-86586-230-3

A product of the National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education

Published in 1992 by The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091-1589
Stock No. R638

This document was prepared pursuant to Cooperative Agreement No. H030E00001-91A with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. Agencies undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express their judgment freely in professional and technical matters. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Department of Education position or policy.

Table of Contents

Introduction 1
Activities for Disability Awareness 3
- Disability Awareness Day/Week 3
- Work Day 6
- Social Event 7
- Child Care 7
- Buddy System 8
- Volunteering 10
- Resources for Disability Awareness 11

Activities for Career Awareness 15
- Career Awareness Presentations 15
- Field Trip 17
- Recreation Program Aide 18
- Student Aide/Peer Tutor 19
- Student Club 21
- Resources for Career Awareness 23

Introduction

Over four and a half million children with disabilities from birth to 21 years of age are currently receiving special education, related services, and early intervention. It is projected that the numbers will continue to grow over the next decade.

While the number of children needing special education services has grown over the past two decades, the number of qualified special education professionals and related services providers has not kept pace. For example, the U.S. Department of Education has reported that in school year 1988-89, there was a shortage of almost 30,000 special education teachers. Projections suggest that the shortages will continue to increase.

It is not too late, nor beyond our means to avert this crisis. While a variety of strategies will be necessary, an essential component is the exposure of students and others who are interested in seeking an alternative career to the rewards of working with special education populations.

The purpose of this guide is to provide a collection of ideas for activities to encourage students and other individuals to explore careers in special education and related services. It is designed for active professionals, such as counselors, educators, and others in the community, who work with students at the middle-/junior-high, high school, and junior-college level or have an opportunity to communicate with people seeking new career options.

This guide is based on several assumptions:

- Major efforts should be undertaken to provide disability awareness experiences that might lead to a decision to choose a career working with special populations.
- Career choices are often based on experiences a person has had that relate to a particular career and from information gathered from professionals practicing in that field.
- The best recruiters of the next generation of special educators and related services providers are practicing professionals.

On the following pages are suggested disability awareness and career awareness activities and implementation guidelines. Whether these activities are undertaken with a group of students or with others considering a new career, it is important to remember the following:

- People need to feel that they are full participants in any activity.
- People need to feel that their opinions are being heard and that they count.
- People want to show what they are capable of doing and accomplishing.
- People are looking for concrete ways to test their interest and potential for a given career.
- People appreciate the guidance and structure that is present in a well-planned group experience.

Activities for Disability Awareness

Before considering a career in special education and related services, individuals need to have some knowledge and understanding of disabilities and the environment in which people with disabilities live and work. Awareness activities are generally designed to increase participant knowledge and awareness about the lives of people with disabilities.

Each of the activities described on the following pages offers unique learning opportunities about individuals with disabilities, disability related issues and one's own reactions to disabilities. These and related activities are appropriate and productive ways to begin to explore and expand one's own knowledge and attitudes about disabilities.

DISABILITY AWARENESS DAY/WEEK

Disability awareness events, whether a full-day event or a series of activities spread over a week or several weeks, aim to heighten awareness about individuals with disabilities and their unique needs.

Typically, awareness events are structured around several of these elements.

- *Information Presentation.* A group might have a speaker, view a film about disability, or read literature highlighting an individual with disabilities and then discuss their reactions and questions as a group.

  During initial probing of the group, assess group members to determine their knowledge levels, information needs, and areas of interest. Are they interested in simply learning that people do have differing abilities and disabilities? Do they want to know what causes disabilities? Do they have fears or anxieties about disabilities?

  Next determine the group's interests and how they would best like to obtain information. Would they prefer a speaker (with disabilities or someone who simply has information), a film, or some other format for gaining information?

- *Simulations*. Another useful type of exploratory activity is simulation. Each person simulates having a specific disability for a period of time and lives with all of the limitations and assistive devices associated with that disability. For example, individuals would complete tasks using crutches or wheelchairs or might be required to communicate without speech.

  When planning a simulation, be sure the activity can not be seen as ridiculing or making fun of individuals with a particular disability. Make sure each situation is safe (no blindfolds worn in traffic). And make every attempt to ensure the simulation is realistic, not based on stereotypes.

  Suggestions for other activities may be found in the CEC "Conducting an Exceptional Children's Week in Your Community" booklet. See the complete citation in the Disability Awareness Resources listing at the end of this chapter.

- *Discussion*. Discussion is a key element in the success of an awareness activity. A general discussion with the group members about their experiences can help you gauge the group's level of interest and knowledge. You will most likely find that at least one participant will have a relative or friend who has a disability. This information changes the discussion from a purely abstract conversation to one that becomes more real and personalized.

  A discussion of the history and current status of society's response to individuals with disabilities is important, too. Society has made great strides in its treatment of individuals with disabilities. It is important to know how far we have come both in public attitudes and social policy from the segregation and discrimination mentality of 20 years ago.

Students Advocate for ADA Compliance

A discussion of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) led high school student CEC members in Solon, Ohio to visit local restaurants with yardsticks in hand to measure adherence to ADA requirements. Restaurants found accessible were commended and a listing of these establishments distributed to the entire student body so all students could become more conscious consumers.

For a free copy of the Americans with Disabilities Act and information pertaining to compliance, contact the Office for Americans with Disabilities Act, U.S. Department of Justice, 1333 F Street, NW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20004 Tel: 202/514-0301 or the Disabilities Rights, Education and Defense Fund, 2212 6th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710 Tel: 1-800-466-4232.

You may want to provide information and have discussions on topics such as: the disability rights movement including right to education (PL 94-142) and rights to access and employment (The Americans with Disabilities Act); advances in technology and architecture providing persons with disabilities improved opportunities for participation in society; and changes in public attitudes as revealed through portrayal of persons with disabilities in the media.

- *Interactions with Individuals with Disabilities.* Invite individuals with disabilities or their parents and advocates to spend time with your group talking about specific disabilities and how individuals with these disabilities live and function within the community. Small, informal group interactions are usually most comfortable for both learners and guests. Make sure the invited guest knows that he or she will be imparting knowledge to the group. The tendency to "parade" a person and talk "about" the individual should be avoided. Instead the visit should be a time for true interaction. Use a moderator to structure the initial exchanges with a few questions. In time, the group will respond and the conversation will become more of a roundtable.

Resources for disability awareness events are listed at the end of this chapter.

Guidelines for Planning a Visit with an Individual with Disabilities

- Assess the group members to determine their interest in visiting with an individual with a disability. If there is interest, have them list disability areas of most interest to them.
- When you issue the invitation to an individual, make sure the individual feels comfortable with the request and knows that it is okay to decline the invitation. If the person is cognitively impaired, make sure that you obtain permission from the individual's guardian or case manager and that any of the individual's work related responsibilities are accommodated appropriately.
- Prior to the visit, meet as a group to discuss expectations and concerns.
- Structure the visit for small informal group interaction. Sit in a circle to increase the comfort of all. Plan some introductory questions for the moderator to pose to the guest.
- Following the visit, have the group discuss what they learned.
- Be sure to send a thank you note to the invited guest after the event.

Sources for Speakers

Each community is different, but here are some generic sources for finding persons with disabilities who might be comfortable speaking to your group:

- Community-based programs.
- Parent groups.
- Students in or graduates of special education programs.
- Local advocacy groups.
- Local offices of Easter Seal, Special Olympics, or Very Special Arts.

WORK DAY

A work day is an opportunity to get to know individuals with disabilities as they work with your group on a specific project. For example, your group together with individuals with disabilities can paint, decorate, or otherwise brighten up a facility used by individuals with disabilities. The work group can operate a car wash or staff a bake sale, proceeds of which go to purchase new equipment for a program.

An activity for a high school or service club that includes individuals with disabilities as members, could be to conduct a White Elephant Sale as a fund raiser. Collecting donations, advertising the sale, and staffing the tables could be done by all members of the club. Funds gained from this activity could be used later, for example, to host a Halloween party at a preschool, complete with costumes and pumpkin carving.

Work days provide an excellent informal context to interact with individuals with disabilities. These work days offer the chance to include everyone in the activity: students, professionals, individuals with disabilities, parents, and family members. The experience provides concrete examples of how each individual approaches tasks uniquely. Yet all group members share a common joy of accomplishment when the work is completed.

Good communication and coordination with persons at the work site are essential for success.

- Establish with the work site personnel what work is planned, what needs to be done, what will be provided, and what the group needs to bring.
- Have your group identify the various tasks needed to complete the job and discuss how each will be accomplished.
- If possible, visit the site and have your students get to know a little bit about the individuals with disabilities who will be joining them on the work crew.

- Before the scheduled workday, meet with your group to set guidelines for appropriate behavior and to reinforce the objectives of the work.
- Following the activity, discuss what was learned from the experience.

SOCIAL EVENT

Social events, such as a dance or party, can give your group many opportunities for informal interaction with individuals with disabilities. For example, your students can invite a group of individuals with disabilities to attend a dance or a music performance, or join them for roller skating. Or your group could host a party, like a pizza party, to coincide with a televised football game.

High school club members in Ohio who provide tutoring to special education students double-dated with their tutees. Besides attending the prom together with their respective dates, the tutors and the tutees participated in all the rituals associated with the event. Female tutors and their tutees shopped together for dresses and fixed each other's hair, while their dates shared the fun of shopping for tuxedos and corsages. The double-date couples went to the preprom dinner and attended the postprom social together.

If your group will be attending a social event sponsored by a disability group, group members may offer to help with pre-event activities, such as making decorations, assisting with refreshments, or even giving dance lessons. These pre-event work groups offer additional opportunities for all involved to get to know each other better.

Guidelines for Hosting an Event

- Plan activities to break the ice and make everyone feel a part of the group. Group singing and circle dancing are two good inclusive activities.
- If the individuals do not know one another, have name tags for all to wear.
- Involve a planning committee to plan the event. Invite individuals with disabilities to be part of the planning.
- Extend the joint planning committee's duties to include co-hosting and clean up activities.
- Following the event, discuss how the event went with your students.

CHILD CARE

Caring for children with disabilities is an excellent way to gain understanding of various individuals and disabilities. It also provides invaluable assistance to parents and other caregivers.

Members of your group may wish to participate in this activity informally on their own. If so, they need to prepare for providing child care.

- Interested individuals should complete some type of basic baby sitting course. Additional courses might be considered, such as emergency care courses through the Red Cross (or any other such agency) where training in general emergency procedures such as CPR are taught.
- A checklist should be developed that outlines all pertinent emergency information and gives telephone numbers where parents, guardians, or other family members may be reached.
- Prior to caring for the child for the first time, the care giver should talk to the parents or guardians to determine special care needs and discuss concerns of both parties. It's a good idea to meet the child and get to know him or her so that the care situation isn't a completely new experience.

Your group may decide to develop a pool of potential sitters. When advertising the services offered, the group needs to be careful to specify limitations in the types of care and range of services it can provide to avoid liability problems. Meet periodically with the group to share experiences and discuss problems.

A Tip for Sitters

"I have taken care of my disabled cousin for the last 10 years. Knowing my cousin and her habits beforehand made me more comfortable caring for her. Besides learning about the child's disability, sitters should ask about the child's routine and specific needs or requests that the child may have. For example, I had trouble understanding my cousin when she asked for favorite foods or toys, so I asked my aunt to tell me the items my cousin usually wanted and then I was able to connect what she said with what she wanted."
—Hilary, a college student majoring in special education

BUDDY SYSTEM

Buddy systems pair group members with persons with disabilities on an individual basis to develop friendships and plan activities together as in a natural friendship. Individuals with disabilities gain tremendously from this arrangement, often experiencing for the first time, social relationships outside their immediate family. "Buddies" gain from this arrangement too, gaining insights about specific disabilities and engaging in a potentially lasting friendship.

Typical activities that buddies might plan together include going to a local mall, attending a sporting event, going to a movie theater or renting a video to watch at home, visiting a local zoo or museum, or just going for a bicycle ride or walk.

Relationships could include "telephone buddies," homework "helpers," or peer tutors, if appropriate.

Preparing for the buddy activity is the key to success.

- Provide a detailed outline of the proposed activity, giving definite departure/arrival times and develop contingency plans in case they are needed.
- Develop a checklist ahead of time, outlining all pertinent emergency information and giving telephone numbers where parents can be reached, etc.
- Establish a time to talk with parents or other caregivers before the day of the activity to determine special needs or concerns they may have.
- Anticipate possible behaviors that might be demonstrated by the disabled person and discuss possible responses.

Best Buddies of America, Inc.

Best Buddies of America, Inc. is sponsored by the Kennedy Foundation. It provides persons with mental retardation the opportunity to make friends with nondisabled college students. Friendship is the crucial element in the buddy program. All of the activities are designed to develop lasting friendships between participants through involvement in a variety of recreational activities or by just "being there." For more information contact Best Buddies of America, Inc., 1350 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005, Tel: 202/347-7265.

Recently the George Washington University Best Buddy Chapter participated in its university's Superdance, a fund raiser for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The participants raised money by getting people to sponsor them for certain amount of time dancing. The college students and their buddies enjoyed their time together and contributed to a worthy cause as well.

Other Buddy chapters have organized bowling leagues and basketball leagues and socialized at sledding parties and roller skating parties.

"I am very happy to have a Buddy like Bill because he is someone I can talk to and spend time with. My Buddy has taken me out to Pizza Hut, and on Sundays we have picnics together. I enjoy these times with him very much. I consider my Buddy to be like a brother...We can act any way with each other and be ourselves. We have both discussed going to more basketball games someday soon because we both enjoy the sport. I also hope someday to have a girlfriend like my Buddy does, maybe he can help me find one." *- Martin L, a buddy*
Source: BUDDY LINE. (1992, February). The ByLine. p. 3.

VOLUNTEERING

An easy way for individuals to find out more about people with disabilities is through volunteer activities. They may wish to participate in one of the many established community agency volunteer programs. These agencies routinely receive requests for volunteers. Agencies usually provide volunteer training and some even sponsor events that structure volunteer activities.

For example, volunteers who work with Special Olympics have many options for activities throughout the year. Depending on the locale, there could be as many as 20 different winter and summer sports that volunteers could help with. During the Olympic events, volunteers are needed in a variety of positions, such as timers for individual events and "huggers" who provide congratulations to the athletes at the completion of events. Volunteers can coach athletes during the 8-week training session prior to competition. To prepare for events, coaches and other volunteers are encouraged to attend coach training school organized and provided by the Special Olympics.

"Special Olympics is how I got involved in special education. My younger sister is disabled so the two of us started going to events—she as an athlete and me as a helper—about 10-years ago. Now I continue. I'm a coach for both a volleyball team and a basketball team."
—Suzanne, a special educator

"I was in Figure Skating Special Olympics. I won 10 first places and 3 third place awards. Also, Patrick Swayze picked me up and carried me."
—Alice, a Special Olympics athlete

Sources for Volunteer Experiences

Contact the national organizations for names and addresses of local contact persons.

Association for
Retarded Citizens
P. O. Box 1047
Arlington, TX 76004
Tel: 817/261-6003

Big Brothers/Big Sisters
of America
230 N. 13th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Tel: 215/567-7000

Boy Scouts of America
1325 Walnut Hill Lane
P.O. Box 152079
Irving, TX 75015-2079
Tel: 214/580-2000

National Easter Seal Society
70 East Lake Street
Chicago, IL 60601
Tel: 312/726-6200

Girl Scouts of America
830 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022
Tel: 1-800-247-8319

YMCA of USA
101 N. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606
Tel: 1-800-872-9622

YWCA of USA
726 Broadway
New York, NY 10003
Tel: 1-800-872-9622

United Way of America
701 N. Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-2045
Tel: 703/836-7100

Special Olympics International
1350 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: 202/628-3630

Very Special Arts
Education Office
JFK Center for Performing Arts
Washington, DC 20566
Tel: 202/628-2800 or
1-800-933-8721

National Information Center for
Children and Youth with
Disabilities (NICHCY)
P. O. Box 1492
Washington, DC 20013
Tel: 703/893-6061 or
1-800-999-5599

RESOURCES FOR DISABILITY AWARENESS

Organizations with Resources

Kids on the Block, Inc.
9385-C Gerwig Lane
Columbia, MD 21046
Tel: 410/290-9095

Has various publications including booklets, entitled *Each and Every One*, one for primary grades and another for intermediate grades.

The Council for Exceptional Children
Information Center
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589
Tel: 703/264-9474

Has several publications including: *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990: What You Should Know?*; *Being at Ease with Handicapped Children* (ERIC Digest E366); *Disabilities: An Overview* (ERIC Digest 420); *Fostering Peer Acceptance of Handicapped Students* (ERIC Digest E406); and *Conducting an Exceptional Children's Week in Your Community*.

Public Image Network
3894 Indian Ripple Road
Dayton, OH 45440
Attn: Education Coordinator
Tel: 513/426-9993

Has several awareness materials, including *On the INside*, a curriculum for high school students, and Partners for Community Living Awareness Curriculum for Grades 6-8.

General Bibliographies of Literature for Students

Bower, Eli M. (Ed.). (1980). *Handicapped in literature*. Denver: Love.

Carlin, M., Laughlin, J. & Saniga, R. (1991). *Understanding abilities, disabilities, and capabilities: A guide to children's literature*. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Smieja, L.L., Thomas, N.E., & Friesen, B.J. (1990). *Brothers and sisters of children with disabilities: An annotated bibliography*. Portland, OR: Families as Allies Project, Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health, Portland State University.

Literature for Students

Aiello, B. & Shulman, J. (1988). *Business is looking up*. Frederick, MD: Twenty-First Century Books.

Bernstein, J. (1988). *Loving Rachel: A family's journey from grief*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, & Company.

Drimmer, F. (1988). *Born different: Amazing stories of some very special people*. New York, NY: Athenaeum, Macmillan.

Emmert, M. (1989). *I'm the big sister now*. Niles, IL: Albert Whitman & Company

Gehret, J. (1991). *Eagle eyes: A child's view of attention deficit disorder*. Fairport, NY: Verbal Images Press.

Gordon, M. (1991). *Jumpin Johnny get back to work: A child's guide to ADHD/hyperactivity*. (1991). New York, NY: GSI Publications.

Holcomb, N. (1990). *Sarah's surprise*. Exton, PA: Jason and Nordic.

Krementz, J. (1989). *How it feels to fight for your life*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company.

Lee, C. (1992). *Faking it*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinman Educational Books.

Muldoon, K.M. (1989). *Princess Pooh*. Niles, IL: Albert Whitman & Company.

Peckinpah, S.L. (1991). *Rosey the imperfect angel*. Woodland Hills, CA: Scholars Press.

Taylor, R. (1991). *All by self: A father's story about a differently-abled child*. Boulder, CO: Light On Books and Videotapes.

Trainer, M. (1991). *Differences in common: Straight talk on mental retardation, Down syndrome, and life*. Rockville, MD: Woodbine House.

Films

AIM - For life after. [Video]. Chicago, IL: Access Living. Available from Access Living, 815 West Van Buren, Chicago, IL 60607.

Autism: A world apart. [Video]. Boston, MA: Fanlight Productions. Available from Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax Street, Boston, MA 02130.

Bravo gloria. [Video]. New York: Filmakers Library. Available from Filmakers Library, Inc., 124 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016.

A different heart. [Video]. Boston: Fanlight Productions. Available from Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax Street, Boston, MA 02130.

They don't come with manuals. [Video]. Boston: Fanlight Productions. Available from Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax Street, Boston, MA 02130.

Activities for Career Awareness

Career Awareness activities focus on the exploration of career options. The purpose of each of the activities described in this section centers around that very personal probing an individual goes through that may eventually lead to a career choice.

Discussions with people practicing in the field are critical. So too are discussions among the career seekers. Questions such as "What's it's like to be a teacher?" "How do I feel about teaching students with disabilities?" need to be addressed.

CAREER AWARENESS PRESENTATIONS

Invite professionals who work with children with exceptionalities to spend time with your group, talking about their own careers and experiences in special education and related services. The service providers may come from neighborhood schools or from other locations. Representatives could be invited to represent various specialty areas (e.g., learning disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, and visual impairments) or represent various professional roles (e.g., resource room teacher, teacher consultant, and administrator). Other specialists from related services and early intervention areas (e.g., early intervention resource teacher, adapted physical education teacher, and occupational therapy) could offer views of other career choices.

The purpose of each of the presentations is to provide information for exploring career options. An effort should be made to ask the teachers and related service providers to describe all aspects of their role including their direct interactions with students, as well as other duties, such as planning and coordination tasks. Additionally, ask each professional to touch on issues beyond what goes on in the classroom:

- Preparation and qualifications needed.
- What made the individual choose that career.
- Rewards and challenges of the field.

Guidelines for Planning a Career Awareness Day

- Determine the number of professionals who can be comfortably accommodated in one meeting.
- If you have multiple speakers, consider sponsoring a poster session or career "fair." Each professional would be invited to set up a display of information about his or her role in educating children with disabilities. Participants would spend the meeting visiting each display. The event could be structured so that your group would visit each display together, or members of the group could be free to visit the display that interests them personally and interact individually with presenters.
- Set the date and location of the meeting, presentation times, and estimated duration of the presentations, including questions and answers. Give the presenters some suggestions concerning their presentation and the interests of the audience.
- Arrange for any equipment speakers might need for their presentations. Arrange for hospitality hosts and refreshments.
- After the event, send thank-you notes to all presenters.
- Conduct a follow-up discussion with your group about what they learned.

Student Recruitment

In California, the state National Education Association (NEA) sponsored a project that focused on the rewards of teaching. The effort was aimed at recruiting minority high school and college students who showed potential for entering the field of education.

The program identified various high schools and colleges with high minority enrollments. Then, student NEA members visited these schools and talked to students, classes, and members of existing clubs, explaining what is involved in preparing to become a teacher and how to qualify for financial aid.

Career Awareness Resource

Promoting Special Education Career Awareness. (1992). Reston, VA: National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education.

This guide provides helpful hints for giving presentations on special education as a career. Includes speech outline, sample handouts, overhead transparency masters, and typical questions and answers. Also includes designs for displays on choosing special education as a career. Available from: Professions Information Center, The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589, Tel: 703/264-9474.

FIELD TRIP

Field trips to observe and interact with practicing professionals in special education and related services can help clarify career options. Not only can your group see professionals in action, they can also experience the kinds of settings in which professionals work.

For career awareness field trips to be successful, they must also provide the opportunity to interact with the professionals working with individuals with disabilities. This includes having the professionals describe:

- Their role in direct intervention providing educational service to children.
- Other duties of their job.
- Preparation and qualification needed.
- What made them choose the career.
- Rewards and challenges of the field.

For example, an early intervention center might be one destination for a field trip. There, observations could be made of the special education teacher, the physical therapist, the occupational therapist, and the speech therapist, all working with infants and toddlers and their families. Later, during the interaction portion of the visit, these professionals could address the team approach concept used to meet the needs of the children.

Guidelines for Sponsoring Field Trips

- Prior to the trip: Meet with your group before the trip to generate questions to ask the professionals and help structure what they should look for.
- At the site: Individuals will observe the special educators and related service providers and discuss their roles with them.
- Following the trip: Discuss what was observed, reactions, and further questions.

RECREATION PROGRAM AIDE

Careers in adapted physical education and recreation therapy can be explored by encouraging your group members to assist in recreation programs for exceptional individuals sponsored by local government agencies or organizations.

For example, there are many outdoor adventure week-long overnight camps for students with and without disabilities. They usually feature adaptive wilderness outings and noncompetitive sports. Most of these camps offer Counselor-in-Training programs and counselor positions for which group members may wish to apply.

Camp jobs offer many advantages to students and others seeking career awareness because they:

- Provide a fun environment.
- Are generally paying jobs.
- Generally include housing and meals.
- Often entail travel to a different part of the country.

During the academic year, consider working with a school's physical education class. Since many special education students are mainstreamed into regular education physical education classes, recreation aides could be teamed with these students. For example, a female student who can't run but can walk fast could be joined by a recreation aide who would walk the course with her.

If a recreation aide program does not exist in your locale, you may wish to set up and structure a unique aide experience for your group. To do this you and your group will need to work with the recreation program administrator to determine:

- Duration of the program (semester or school year).
- Typical duties and task for the aide.
- Orientation training and additional training as needed. (Consider using adapted physical education and recreation therapists from your local school as resources.)
- The option to earn credit for the experience.
- Tracking and monitoring individual experiences.
- Evaluation of performance.

Sources for Summer Camp Programs

The guide to summer camps and summer schools. (Annual edition). Boston, MA: Porter Sargent.

Peterson's summer opportunities for kids and teenagers. (Annual edition). Princeton, NJ: Peterson's Guide.

Ware, C. (Annual Edition). *Summer options for teenagers.* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

STUDENT AIDE/PEER TUTOR

Students can explore special education teaching as a career option by being student aides or peer tutors in an existing special education program, their own classroom, or in a resource room.

Peer tutors and student aides usually work during their study hall period. If a work-study program is available, student aides could be placed in sheltered workshops, group homes, preschool programs, or child care centers where individuals with disabilities are served.

In planning a program for student aides and peer tutors, it is important to determine what these assistants will do, the classes in which they will be involved, and what will be expected of them. With the special education teachers, you need to decide the duration of the program (a semester or an entire school year), the option to earn credit for the experiences, responsibility for tracking/reporting student absences, and evaluation of student performance.

Preparation for the student aides and tutors is essential. They need to know background information on the various disabilities of the students that they will be working with. They also need to be given information about what kinds of behaviors they are likely to encounter when working with these students and how they should respond. You need to meet periodically with your group giving them an opportunity to share their experiences and discuss problems.

Example of a Summer Student Aide Program in California

The California State University-Dominguez Hills provided a special experience for a group of minority junior- and senior-high school students who indicated an interest in pursuing a career in special education.

These future teachers participated in an on-campus Saturday orientation program designed to introduce them to the classroom of the future. They then completed a 10-week program that included 3 weeks of preparation and 7 weeks of teaching elementary students.

The future teachers worked in cooperative teaching teams using the campus classrooms, computer lab, video equipment, and biology labs. The future teachers were paid an hourly wage for their work as teachers in the program.

The experience was rated as highly positive for all participants involved:

- All "teachers" in the first cycle wanted to continue in the program. Those indicating teaching as a potential career choice increased from 20 percent prior to the program to 70 percent following the experience. It is hoped that a follow-up study of the future teachers' choice of university major will reveal the long-term impact of the program.
- The parents of the children who were in the future teachers' classes also rated the program as highly beneficial to their children.

Peer Helpers in Palo Alto

A peer helpers club was started by the Palo Alto High School of the Palo Alto, California Unified School District. A group of 40 students were invited to be peer helpers with a group of students with mental retardation. A preliminary training of the peer helpers was held before the program was set in motion. All new club members were required to schedule individual classroom visits aimed at meeting the students who were in the program. In the training, each peer helper learned about the nature of his or her buddy's disability. They also learned how to handle everyday situations and potential problems through discussions and role plays.

Ohio Students' Reflections on Tutoring the Disabled

"Becoming a peer tutor has helped me to realize that underneath all of those labels were real people who wanted to be accepted—just like me!"

"I honestly never thought about how I could help handicapped or disabled people until I joined Project Support. It made me realize things that I never cared about before—such as treating everyone equally."

Peer Tutoring Resource

Warger, Cynthia L. (December 1991). *Peer tutoring: When working together is better than working alone.* (Research & Resources on Special Education, No. 30). Reston, VA: ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children.

This publication reviews the effectiveness of peer tutoring as a teaching strategy. By exploring the various methods of peer tutoring and outlining steps to establish a strong program, the work provides useful information to instructors considering traditional or new approaches to peer tutoring. Provides extensive reference list. Available from The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091-1589, Tel: 703/264-9474.

STUDENT CLUB

A student club can maintain and strengthen the goals of students who are interested in becoming a professional working with children with disabilities. These clubs can embrace all education specialties or concentrate on one field, such as special education.

Student club members can encourage wider acceptance and understanding of disabilities by sponsoring school-wide disability awareness events. They can also begin to try out career options in various fields serving people with disabilities by providing tutoring, being a recreational aide, or serving in other volunteer services.

Club members can also visit or invite speakers from local colleges and universities to find out more about professional preparation options. They can participate at district and state professional education association conferences as special student observers or as session hosts, introducing presenters and managing session evaluations.

The main motivating factors for students to join these clubs are:

- Fun activities.
- Interactions with fellow students.
- Activities that address everyday issues with which students are faced.

Successful club activities and interactions focus on these motivations.

Special Education High School Clubs

The Council for Exceptional Children encourages the formation of high school CEC clubs. Currently there are approximately 16 clubs located primarily in Ohio and Florida. Clubs enable high school teen volunteers to help in the classroom as student teachers, and thus make early informed decisions about a career in the field.

For information about starting a club in your school, contact Sheila Ficker, CEC, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589, Tel: 703/264-9483

Student CEC for College and University Students

Special Education majors in colleges and universities are welcome student members of The Council for Exceptional Children, the international professional association for special educators. Student CEC chapters sponsor events such as Special Olympics, fund raisers for disability groups, and socials for individuals with disabilities.

They also host guest speakers who address such issues as student teaching, graduate studies, and interviewing for a first teaching job. Chapters provide support to special education majors beginning their professional careers.

For information about starting a chapter at your university, contact Sheila Ficker, CEC, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589, Tel: 703/264-9483

Resources for Clubs

Special Education Clubs. Two resources are available to assist in organizing a special education high school club:

- The Department of Member and Unit Services (DMUS) of The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) produces *Organizing A High School Club*, a packet for students and advisors who wish to begin a CEC club for students interested in special education. To receive information, call or write Sheila Ficker, CEC, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589, Tel: 703/264-9483

- Project Support in Ohio is designed to make a positive difference in the quality of educators for students with

disabilities by using high school students as volunteers in special education classes. Project Support has two documents for use with clubs: a student manual and a club advisor manual. For more information, contact Sally Pisarchick, 14605 Granger Road, Maple Heights, OH 44137, Tel: 217/587-5966.

RESOURCES FOR CAREER AWARENESS

Special Education and Related Services Professional Associations

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
1900 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589
Tel: 703/476-3400

American Association for Counseling and Development
5999 Stevenson Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22304
Tel: 703/823-9800

American Occupational Therapy Association
1383 Piccard Drive
Rockville, MD 20850
Tel: 301/948-9626

American Physical Therapy Association
1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Tel: 703/684-2782

American Speech, Language, Hearing Association
10801 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852
Tel: 301/897-6700

The Council For Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589
Tel: 703/620-3660

CEC - Division of Early Childhood
3 Church Circle, Box 194
Annapolis, MD 21401
Tel: 301/269-6801

National Art Therapy Association
1220 Allanson Road
Mudelin, IL 60060
Tel: 708/949-6064

National Association of Social Workers
750 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002
Tel: 202/408-8600

National Association for Music Therapy
8455 Colesville Road, Suite 930
Silver Spring, MD 20003
Tel: 301/589-3300

National Association of School Nurses
5700 Sanger Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22311
Tel: 703/824-6950

National Association for School Psychologists
8455 Colesville Road, Suite 1000
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Tel: 301/608-0500

National Dance Therapy Association
2000 Century Plaza, Suite 108
Columbia, MD 21044
Tel: 301/997-4040

National Therapeutic
Recreation Society
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302
Tel: 703/820-4940

Registry of Interpreters for
the Deaf, Inc.
8719 Colesville Road, Suite 310
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Tel: 301/608-0050

Books for Career Awareness

Doorlag, D. & Lewis, R.B. (1983). *Teaching special students in the mainstream.* Columbus: Merrill.

Gearhart, B.R., & Weishahn, M.W. (1980). *The handicapped student in the regular classroom* (2nd ed.). St. Louis, MO: Mosby.

National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education. (1992). *Promoting special education career awareness.* Reston, VA: Author

Films/Videos Related to Careers

The children who learn to listen. [Video]. New York, NY: Filmakers Library. Available from Filmakers Library, Inc., 124 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016.

Commitment to caring. (1991). [Video]. Rockville, MD: American Occupational Therapy Association. Available from AOTA, 1383 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850.

Consider an exceptional career. [Video]. Plymouth, MI: Michigan Council for Exceptional Children. Available from Michigan CEC, 11000 McClumpha Road, Plymouth, MI 48170.

In the middle. [Video]. Boston, MA: Fanlight Productions. Available from Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax Street, Boston, MA 02130.

Jenny's story. [Video]. Boston: Fanlight Productions. Available from Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax Street, Boston, MA 02130.

Learning disability: A family crisis. [Video]. Topeka, KS: Menninger Video Productions. Available from: Menninger Video Productions, Menninger Clinic, Box 829, Topeka, KS 66601.

Reach for the power—teach. [Video]. Boston, MA: Recruiting New Teachers. Available from the National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education, Information Center, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589.

Reaching out: A story about mainstreaming. [Video]. Deerfield, IL: Walt Disney Productions. Available from Walt Disney Productions, Simon and Schuster School Group, 108 Wilmot Road, Deerfield, IL 60015.

Regular lives. [Video]. Alexandria, VA: PBS Video. Available from The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589.

Specific learning disabilities in the classroom. [Video]. Davis, CA: Davidson Films. Available from Davidson Films, Inc. 231 "E" Street, Davis, CA 95616.

Speech-language pathology and audiology: Careers that make a difference. [Video]. Rockville, MD: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Available from ASHA, Publication Sales, 10801 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852.